The Southern PATRIOT

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Thou Shalt Not Vote . . .

Georgia Governor M. E. Thompson's March 27th veto of the "white primary law" illegally signed by Herman Talmadge is a great victory for popular government. But it by no means removes the mounting tide of attacks upon the right to vote in a large Southern area.

This is the sober fact. In the historic 1944 Texas Case, the U. S. Supreme Court ruled that color cannot count in primary elections. South Carolina's tight political machine countered by repealing all state laws governing primaries, thus rendering the decision null and void there.

The State Democratic Executive Committee became the sole authority over primaries, and thus over the actual elections. Being "a private club," the Committee can accept or reject anyone it wishes, Negro or white. It can perpetuate in office a small clique of reactionary politicians whether the people want them there or not. The name for this is fascism.

On February 20, Georgia followed suit. There the so-called "white primary law" was passed immediately following the fascist seizure of power by a man who had less than 700 votes. The March 19th Georgia Supreme Court decision removing Herman ("The Pretender") Talmadge from the governorship imposed upon Governor Thompson the obligation to express the will of the people of Georgia by vetoing it.

A special session of the Mississippi Legislature passed the same kind of law early in March. Florida's regular session, opening April 8th, will have before it a similar measure.

The many technicalities of these bills fail to hide the following facts:

The "white primary laws", disfranchise not only the Negro population, but most of the white.

The "white primary laws" are unconstitutional.

The "white primary laws," are being passed because of the reactionaries' fear of the people and hatred of the universal franchise. The plantation aristocrats, the Southern power trusts and the Wall Street monopolies to which they are indebted, have decided to deprive the people of their vote rather than run the risk of their electing more democratic leaders like Pepper, Arnall and Folsom.

The "white primary laws," if successfully entrenched, will surely be used by national reactionary forces to strike a mortal blow at representative democracy all over the country.

The people have several weapons, but they are not yet putting them to good enough use.

1. *Organized public protest and pressure is the best weapon.* Public action in Georgia has been widespread, but it has a big job ahead to combat the Talmadge forces. It has begun to gain momentum in South Carolina. In Mississippi, brave Negro citizens have mapped a plan of action, but white progressives are not yet matching their efforts. As reported on the next page, in Florida the Southern Conference for Human Welfare has mobilized a representative inter-racial statewide protest against the vote steal.

2. *Court fights are another strong weapon.* On February 21 in Columbia, S. C., George A. Elmore, a Negro businessman, filed suit charging the Democratic Committee with violating the Constitution by barring Negroes from voting in last July's primary. He is backed by the NAACP and the Negro Citizens Committee of South Carolina.

3. *The third main weapon is prevention.* Fascism spread out from Germany because the Third Reich's neighboring states were unable to mobilize themselves in time. Alabama with her Boswell Amendment, Louisiana with her background of Huey Long dictatorship, Arkansas with her present search for "Constitutional" methods of disfranchising Negroes, must take this as a warning. In America, as in Germany, fascism is "dynamic."

This issue of the right to vote has come to the point of decision. The LaGrange (Georgia) Ministerial Association recently put it in a nutshell when it said: "The white primary bill is unChristian, unwise, undemocratic, unconstitutional and contrary to the historic tradition of church, state and nation."

The issue will not hang in the balance indefinitely. It will be won, today, if organized labor, the Negro people's organizations, the churches and religious organizations, the farm groups, and all bodies dedicated to a democratic way of life, get together and act. If they do not, it will surely be lost. In that event, many desperate, dark and perhaps bloody decades may pass before it is won back.

As a Liberal Southern Senator Sees the Trend

In a recent exclusive interview with a reporter from *In Fact* Senator Claude Pepper of Florida stated that, in his opinion, the Nation is in the throes of an "intellectual witch hunt" and that Thomas Jefferson, if alive today, "would be afaid to speak his own mind in this atmosphere."

"Anyone who tries to make our democracy work is assailed and vilified," he declared. "If you're for more and better jobs, education, housing, school lunches, etc., you're a communist, a communist-fronter, a New Dealer, a fellow-traveler, a do-gooder or a misguided liberal . . . We must constantly remember that Hitler and the Nazis built up their vicious system on the pretense of fighting communism. Lots of people in this country are actually fighting democracy under that guise."

He also stated, "The Republican Party is convicted before history of using the government not on behalf of the people for peace, but, too often, on behalf of the corporations for profit. . . . The cartelists whose philosophy Dulles shares are the robber barons of our growing age of expansion."

Florida Girds to Protect Universal Franchise

While the final outcome of the Georgia "white primary" issue hung in the balance following Governor M. E. Thompson's accession to office as a result of the March 19th Georgia Supreme Court Decision, progressive Floridians were rallying statewide protest against a similar measure soon to be introduced there.

The Fourth Congressional District Committee of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare initiated and coordinated a meeting March 22nd in Winter Park which was sponsored by 150 prominent Floridians from the fields of the church, both wings of organized labor, associations of Negro citizens, women's civic movements, veterans, educators, social workers, newspapermen and members of the Florida Legislature.

This is how is came about. Some time ago State Senator John E. Mathews, who unsuccessfully sponsored a "white primary" bill in the last session of the Florida Legislature, announced his plan to reintroduce it into the session opening in Tallahassee April 8th.

Late in February Clark H. Foreman, J. Daniel Weitzman and James A. Dombrowski, president, treasurer and administrator of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, conferred with SCHW leaders in Florida concerning the need to rally liberal sentiment in opposition to the measure, the actual purpose of which is to abolish state control of the primaries. Since that time, Mr. Dombrowski has spent several weeks working with the SCHW Fourth Congressional District Executive Committee in preparation for the March 22nd meeting.

Preparatory to the meeting a four-page folder "Defend Democracy in Florida" was circulated throughout the State. In addition to clarifying the real intent of the Mathews Bill, it contains a Senatorial district map of Florida and a listing of all State Senators and Representatives. It outlines concrete steps to be taken by Florida citizens who want to act to protect a universal franchise.

Also widely circulated was a leaflet containing progressive views on the "white primary" issue expressed by *The Tallahassee Daily Democrat, The Miami Herald, The Jacksonville Journal and The Tampa Daily Times.*

On the afternoon of March 22nd, 350 people, 90 percent of them from outside Winter Park and Orlando, gathered in the Congregational Christian Church, of which Rev. Louis Schulz is Pastor. Rev. Daniel C. Whitsett, First Methodist Church, Marianna, was chairman.

After an invocation by Mr. Schulz and greetings from Mayor B. R. Coleman of Winter Park and Leo Sheiner, President SCHW Fourth District Committee, addresses were delivered by Dr. Hamilton Holt, President of Rollins College and SCHW Administrator James A. Dombrowski on "What Is the Mathews White Primary Bill?" and "The White Primary Bill in Georgia: Significance for Florida."

Six discussants described "What the White Primary Bill Means" from various viewpoints as follows: *Good Government*, Dr. Edwin L. Clarke, Rollins College: *Organized Labor*, Philip Whitehead, representing the Florida Federation of Labor AFL and Edwin L. Waller, Secretary, Florida Industrial Union Council, CIO; *Veterans*, J. William Greenleaf, President, American Veterans Committee, Jacksonville; *Religious Ideals*, Rev. George Foster, Pastor, First Methodist Church, Ocala; *Religious Minorities*, Elsie Gluckman, Vice-President, Ladies Aid, Congregation Ohev Shalem, Orlando; *Negro Citizens*, Harry T. Moore, Executive Secretary, Florida Conference of NAACP Branches and President, Progressive Voters League.

Rev. Edward T. Graham, of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Miami, pronounced the benediction.

The principal resolution passed by the Conference reaffirmed "allegiance to the democratic principles of the Constitution of the United States;" opposed "wholeheartedly the unscientific, irreligious and un-American fallacy that government can be improved by denying any group of citizens the right to vote;" urged retention of "the control, supervision and financing" of primary elections by the state; called for "improvement of government through the expansion of equal public education to all our youth and to all adults;" and urged Florida Congressmen and Senators to "support adequate measures designed to give federal aid to public schools in the several states, without regard to race or economic status."

The Conference set up a statewide Committee with five members from each of the six Congressional Districts. The chairmen of these groups will continue intensive work for the defeat of the Mathews Bill, with Rev. Daniel C. Whitsett, Pastor, First Methodist Church, Marianna serving as chairman and Mrs. Carolyn Stephenson, President of the Miami League of Women Shoppers, and Louis Touby, member of the executive board of the SCHW Fourth Congressional District Chapter, as secretary and treasurer respectively.

As a result of the preparatory work preceding the Conference, many Florida organizations have already gone on record opposing the Bill. It is anticipated that, before April 8th, many more will have joined in the fight and that most of them will send representatives to Tallahassee when the legislative session opens. The citizens of Florida are determined not to travel the path which destroys the foundation of democracy and they are confident of continuing coordination and leadership from the Southern Conference for Human Welfare in the Peninsula State.

Among the speakers at Winter Park March 22nd (left to right) James A. Dombrowski, Rev. Louis Schulz, J. William Greenleaf, Dr. Edwin L. Clarke, Harry T. Moore, Rev. George Foster, Leo Sheiner, Elsie Gluckman, Rev. Edward T. Graham, Rev. Daniel C. Whitsett.

North Carolina Campaigns for the Rights of Labor

Anti-labor measures in Southern state legislatures have, in recent weeks, kept pace with the campaign for "white primary" laws. Taken together, they form a highly dangerous two-pronged assault upon the majority of the people of the states in which they have been introduced. The anti-labor measures strike at their living standards. The "white primary" bills seek to remove their ability to combat this onslaught through democratic political action.

Such legislation was adopted in Florida in 1945. This year similar measures have been passed in Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Arkansas and, as we write, are still under consideration in South Carolina and Texas. They will undoubtedly be introduced in the Alabama Legislature in May. The status of the Georgia bill is uncertain following the ousting of Talmadge. A "right to work" bill might possibly be introduced into the special session of the Louisiana Legislature.

In all states where there are committees of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, these Committees are working intensively with organized labor and other groups of citizens which recognize these measures as blows against progressive Southern economic development itself. They have been bringing similar pressure to bear to defeat such legislation at the national level.

An outstanding example of this activity is that carried forward by the SCHW Committee for North Carolina. While the so-called "Right to Work Bill" was passed, the issues were clarified and the basis for ongoing united action laid.

Soon after the opening of the legislative session, the Committee called a statewide legislative conference for exchange of ideas by AFL, CIO, NAACP, AVC, Fellowship of Southern Churchmen and SCHW members. Since that time it has maintained an intensive program of meetings, news releases, radio announcements and public forums.

By March 6 the "Right to Work" Bill had passed the House and was before a Senate Committee. The Committee presented a petition 80 feet long which stretched from the speaker's stand out into the rotunda of the Capitol. It said that the people of North Carolina stand for the protection of labor's rights.

Rev. Lee C. Sheppard, Pastor of the Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, Raleigh, who is Chairman of the SCHW North Carolina Committee, appeared before the Senate Committee to oppose the bill. On the morning of the Committee hearing, he and Mary Price, Committee Executive Secretary, spoke against the bill over Station WPTF in Raleigh. A few days following the hearing, Robert Cahoon, an attorney who is chairman of the Greensboro SCHW Chapter, did likewise over WGBG.

In addition to protests by the Committee for North Carolina and all branches of organized labor, many prominent citizens of the state publicly opposed the measure. Dr. Frank Graham, SCHW Honorary President, testified against it in the House Committee hearing. Dean M. T. Van Hecke, University of North Carolina Professor of Labor Law, testified against it in the Senate. Josephus Daniels and E. B. Jeffress, publisher of the *Greensboro Daily News* also testified against it. North Carolina newspapers opposed it.

During the entire period of the debate, no North Carolina employer spoke for the measure. Proponents for it consisted of a lawyer, a half-dozen workers he brought with him, two ministers and one young man who was "an industrial worker and a veteran." In the middle of his testimony, he pulled a little flag out of his pocket and talked about how he had "fought for Old Glory and the right to work."

The issues and the hidden backing behind the bill are clearly outlined in the radio dialogue between Mr. Sheppard and Miss Price.

* * *

Miss Price: Tomorrow morning the Senate Committee on Manufacturing, Labor and Commerce will hold a public hearing at 9:30 a. m. on House Bill 229, the so-called "Right to Work" Bill.

The Committee for North Carolina, a statewide membership organization of some 1,500 citizens—professional people, businessmen, industrial workers, farmers, and white collar workers—has taken the stand that H. B. 229 is opposed to the best interest of the people of this state. I am pleased to introduce to you Rev. Lee C. Sheppard, of Raleigh, President of the Committee for North Carolina, who will discuss some of the reasons why he thinks passage of this bill is not in keeping with the progressive traditions of North Carolina.

Mr. Sheppard: I and the ogranization which I represent strongly oppose H. B. 229 both from the humanitarian point of view and because it seems likely that such legislation would upset the stability of our economic and social life.

This highly controversial measure, if enacted into law, might seriously impede North Carolina's good industrial relations. Apparently this bill is aimed at weakening, if not destroying, the principle and practice of organized labor in North Carolina. On the contrary, it would seem that every encouragement should be given the laboring men and women of this state to associate themselves together for the purpose of collective bargaining looking toward improved wages and working conditions. Only so, it would seem, can the purchasing power of the people be maintained on a necessary high level.

In view of the fact that the per capita income of North Carolina, and the South, is about half the average of the rest of the Nation, it would seem that the only possible answer to our problem of providing better opportunities for our children, better health, and better housing, would be through greater and more diversified industrialization. More industries, yes, but also fair wages and working conditions for those who produce the industrial products. Economic stability demands ever increasing and higher purchasing power on the part of the masses of the people to keep up the demand for goods, coupled with the power, in terms of adequate income, to purchase the products of our farms and industries.

There is grave danger that if this highly controversial measure is enacted into law and subsequently declared constitutional (both of which possibilities are highly debatable) the result would be a serious disturbance in the now steadily improving industrial relations in North Carolina.

Miss Price: You think then, Mr. Sheppard, that it is not just an anti-labor bill, but that it will affect the welfare of all of us?

Mr. Sheppard: Yes, and here I should like to emphasize that I and many other people who hold no special brief for any form of organized labor are seriously concerned over the welfare of laborers.

Miss Price: I have noticed that there is some confusion as to just what this bill would do. Could you clarify that?

Mr. Sheppard: I am neither a lawyer nor an economist, but I am sure that to

call H. H. 229 an anti-closed shop bill is certainly a confusion. The bill would apparently outlaw not only the closed shop, but also the union shop, the check-off and maintenance of membership contracts. In other words, it outlaws the right of the company and the workers to bargain to agreement as to whether or not there is to be union security, thereby encouraging constant agitation in the relationships between employer and employees.

None of these provisions is imposed upon any company or any group of workers. They are all arrived at as the result of free collective bargaining. I should be just as much opposed to a state law which said that such contracts must be entered into as I am to this present bill which would expressly prohibit such contracts. There seems to be a real question whether H. B. 229 would constitute a violation of the right of contract, a right which is an integral part of our democratic heritage.

Miss Price: Would this bill eliminate strikes?

Mr. Sheppard: Far from it, in the opinion of many persons qualified to make an estimate. On the contrary, by tending to increase industrial unrest, it is most likely that H. B. 229, if enacted into law, would increase strikes. You know, last year North Carolina lost only 2/10 of 1% of the manhours lost in the Nation because of strikes, which puts us far below the average in the 48 states. I feel strongly that this bill would not settle any labor controversies, but would instead tend to increase the number of such disagreements.

Take, for instance, maintenance of membership contracts, which this bill would outlaw. This is the form of contract which worked so successfully during the war in ensuring peaceful labor relations. North Carolina should take pride, I think, in the fact that Dr. Frank P. Graham of this state was primarily responsible for devising this compromise proposal, thereby winning added esteem throughout the Nation. It was a great contribution to the war effort. The idea of these contracts is to stabilize relations. That relieves both the company and the workers from carrying on a continuous campaign. It clears the air.

Miss Price: Mr. Sheppard, there seems to be some divergence of opinion as to the origin of H. B. 229. Do you have any idea on that?

Mr. Sheppard: Only what I read in the papers, to pick up the phrase of a famous American, Mr. Scott, one of the introducers of the bill, alleges that the idea for it came to him when he was on a carrier in the South Pacific.

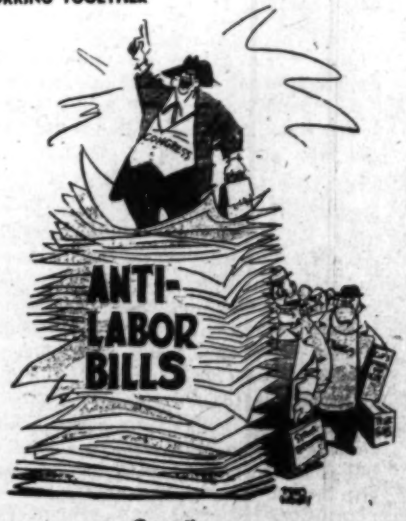
That may be, but it seems strange indeed that this bill follows almost word for word similar legislation introduced in other Southern states. The so-called Christian American Association has boasted considerably that it is the originator of these bills. The Christian Americans are headed by one Lewis Ulrey who formerly worked for Gerald Winrod—until Winrod was indicted for sedition. The organization has been clearly linked with Senator O'Daniel of Texas as well as with the National Association of Manufacturers and other Wall Street interests.

Oh, no, I for one can lend no credence to the statement that H. B. 229 is a home-grown bill. I think it is clear that it is part of a well-planned and well-financed move to destroy the efforts Southerners are making to improve our economic and social opportunities. The bill is part of the disruptive hate movements against which we have just fought a world war.

Miss Price: Have any other states defeated similar measures?

Mr. Sheppard: These bills did not have much success back in the 1945 sessions of the state legislatures. However, forces of reaction often appear in strength after a major war, and the bills seem to be making some headway in the current sessions. I think they are merely a part of the moral and economic reaction following war. Perhaps this bill in itself is not so significant but it is symptomatic of a reactionary trend which should be met courageously and handled correctly. North Carolinians have had just cause for pride in our state's standing in the forefront in the South. I hope that we will maintain that standing by defeating this bill.

WORKING TOGETHER



Conspiracy

After the first world war a drive was started to cripple labor unions. This drive was carried on not as an anti-union drive, but as a drive for the "open shop." The success of that effort was widespread and union membership fell to little more than 3,000,000 during the 1920's. As a result of the inability of working men—a majority of our people—to keep up their purchasing power, we were led to the disaster of the depression of the 1930's in which all of us—businessmen as well as laborers and white collar workers—were the victims.

Miss Price: You think then, Mr. Sheppard, that H. B. 229 has political as well as economic implications?

Mr. Sheppard: That is just what I have been trying to make clear. This bill is not aimed at correcting whatever abuses there may be in the labor movement. It is instead a political move against the working men and women of this country. The facts that its sponsors admit they do not know whether the bill would affect interstate as well as intrastate commerce; that they have made no effort to determine its constitutionality; that in speaking for it they have resorted to emotion rather than analysis, to me give pretty clear evidence that the purpose is to lead the general public into a campaign against labor, to create strife and confusion in our economic life, that could then be capitalized on by a few greedy interests. It is class legislation, which will inevitably bring on class conflicts.

Miss Price: Mr. Sheppard, you said this bill has moral as well as economic and political implications. Would you elaborate a little on that?

Mr. Sheppard: Yes, and that is the chief reason for the interest the Committee for North Carolina has in opposing the passage of H. B. 229. I think its passage would defer the day when our people can have better education, can live in better homes, be more healthy, on a higher income.

I have unbounded confidence in the integrity and good will of the people of North Carolina and their stand on this matter once the issue is clear. I should like to urge you to communicate immediately with your Senators to tell them how you feel on H. B. 229. The public hearing is scheduled for tomorrow.

Willie Earle is on the Conscience of the Nation

A few weeks ago Willie Earle, a young South Carolina Negro, was dragged out of the Pickens County Jail by about 30 men and lynched. He was being held on suspicion of being connected with the killing of T. W. Brown, a white Greenville taxi driver. He had not even been charged with the crime, let alone having been convicted.

It was the first lynching in 1947. Governor J. Strom Thurmond called the state constabulary into immediate action and, with the help of the FBI, all but a few of the murder-mob were quickly caught. Their trials began early in March. Those are the bare facts. Behind them, are some of the following considerations.

The lynching happened in the home state of James F. Byrnes, creator of the "get-tough-for-freedom" policy our State Department is now presumably operating on overseas. Anything less than the death sentence for the lynchers will make America a laughing stock all over the world. What is the use of free elections, or a fair trial, people will ask, to a mutilated corpse?

The lynching happened in the state which was first to pass a so-called "white primary law." Where free elections have been lynched by the state legislature, no citizen can be free from the haunting menace of mob rule which arrogantly thumbs its nose at legislative, judicial and executive arms of democracy alike.

The lynching happened in a state which has just witnessed the inauguration of a Governor who had laid down a program including a number of progressive reforms (see *The Southern Patriot*, March, 1947.) Thurmond's first steps in connection with the lynching were heartening. But the progressive South will be judging South Carolina by the speed and the justice of the final results.

The lynching occurred at the beginning of Brotherhood Week. Brotherhood Week in the South fought pretty shy of the principal enemy of brotherhood in its area—race hate, the poisoned wellspring of lynchings. Protestant-Catholic-Jewish tolerance is important. Protection of the right of a man to live, to vote, to be tried, regardless of his color, is at least equally important. This is a suggestion for giving greater meaning to Brotherhood Week in the South in 1948.

Practically all the lynchers were between 25 and 35 years of age. This means two things. Many of them must be veterans of World War II. The Armed Forces apparently did a pretty poor job of teaching their men what the war was about. Also, lynching will not "automatically die out among the younger generation." Education will help kill it, as it will all forms of murder. The same kind and quantity of electric current as other murderers receive will also help.

A short time ago President Truman set up a Commission on Civil Rights. To an NAACP inquiry made immediately after the lynching, Charles E. Wilson, commission chairman, replied that it is "deeply interested." Citizens have a right to demand that this interest take the form of seeing to it that justice is done in the Earle case.

The day after the lynching, SCHW Administrator James A. Dombrowski issued from Greenville, S. C., a statement that was carried by the Associated Press. It called upon Attorney General Tom Clark to order a Federal Grand Jury investigation on the basis that "the evidence strongly suggests the violation of Federal civil rights statutes."

The Southern white press has reacted variously. In too many instances the approach has been that of *The Columbia State*, which headed its editorial "No Outside Help Needed" and put more emphasis upon the dangers of a Federal Anti-Lynch Act than upon the challenge of mob murder to every American democratic tradition and right.

The Columbia Record, on the other hand, had this to say: "Lynching is murder and it is punishable in South Carolina by electrocution. The last lynching in South Carolina will occur when the first lynchers in South Carolina pay with their lives for taking the law into their own hands."

Out of the Saxon Baptist Church in Spartanburg, S. C., came the true voice of the democratic South. Rev. John B. Isom, the Pastor, preached a sermon, "They Lynched Him" on February 23. Five days before, the day after the lynching, he wrote a letter to the local papers, which they published. It said in part:

"The lynching of Mr. Willie Earle near Pickens, S. C., February 17th is another tragic argument for a national law against such acts of barbaric lawlessness. There would have been such a law passed long ago had it not been for the influence of the Congressmen from the South.

"The lynching is another horrible example of how race prejudice warps and debases the attitudes, ideas and deeds of those who are infected by it. It reflects the sad failure of our homes, churches, schools and community governments to indoctrinate the people with the spirit of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

"Is it not high time for the citizens of the South to instruct our Congressmen in Washington to pass a law making lynchings a national offense? We have let race prejudice rob us of the spirit of democracy and justice. We are unworthy of self-government if we continue to poison the minds of our youth with a racial attitude that imposes upon them a disrespect for law and man. A human society that will tolerate lynching is unfit to survive. It cannot, and will not, endure."

Willie Earle is on the conscience of South Carolina, of the South, of the United States. Early in March an all-white jury completely cleared the accused in the August 8, 1946, Minden, Louisiana, lynching of John C. Jones. The relative moral obligation and financial cost of enforcing a real federal anti-lynching law should carefully be weighed against the program of "preserving democracy" in Greece. South Carolina is one of the 48 States.

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THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE

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Little Drops of Water, Little Atomic Blasts

The people of the South are very close to the fight around David Lilienthal's confirmation as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. The Southern Conference for Human Welfare is also involved first-hand. It came in for considerable mention during the 22 sessions of the Senate Atomic Energy Committee which were recorded, at public expense, on 1825 pages of testimony.

Lilenthal became nationally prominent in 1933 when he was appointed Director of the Tennessee Valley Authority. The present fight has its roots, therefore, in the economic, social and political significance of TVA, a great Southern democratic experiment. The branches of this fight spread out into one of the great international problems of the day: Whether mankind or monopoly is to be master of the new forms of energy science discovers; whether this energy is to be used for suicidal war or peaceful advancement.

In 1933 the United States Congress decided that the publicly owned Tennessee River should be harnessed to serve, rather than left free to ruin, the well-being of the 5,000,000 Americans living in its Valley—a seven-state region almost as large as Great Britain. Congress knew that the River, instead of flooding and eroding the land, could be made to furnish cheap power for cities and farms and to promote soil conservation, new industry, broader markets and a new spirit of enterprise. Perhaps it also foresaw the immense war production potential which TVA later demonstrated.

No fairminded person doubts that TVA has been a tremendous developmental force in the economy of an entire Southern region. At the same time, everyone knows that few institutions in American history have endured such sustained and unprincipled abuse. Why? Because of the fierce hatred of the power monopoly which would gladly retard the progress of the South to protect its stranglehold over electricity and to increase its ability to empty consumers' pockets without fear of competition.

This same utility monopoly, knowing the resentment of the American people against it, has hidden in the wings and brought every ally it could find out onto the stage to do open battle against Lilienthal's appointment to head the Atomic Commission.

We can all learn a great deal from seeing just who these allies are:

1. The Southern poll tax reactionaries, K. D. ("Boss Crump's Boy") McKellar, "Pass-the-Biscuits Pappy" O'Daniel, John H. Overton, etc.

2. Wall Street's principal political spokesman, Republican Senator Robert Taft and his "boys" White and Brewster of Maine, Bridges of New Hampshire, Wherry on Nebraska, Moore of Oklahoma, Brooks of Illinois, etc.

3. The entire anti-New Deal crowd of both parties.

4. The vocal hate-Russia group.

5. The professional anti-Semites.

6. Chanting a refrain, throughout the entire proceedings, those who use red-baiting as a device to conceal their plot to stamp out the faintest spark of liberalism, political independence, group initiative or scientific integrity.

This alliance was determined that the power in a drop of Southern water should not be used to better the lives of the Southern people. This same alliance is equally determined that the power in an atom shall not be used to enrich the lives of the people of the earth.

This is the kernel of the Lilienthal controversy. It began in the South but, like so many other "Southern" issues, has its national and worldwide windows. It confronts us with the fateful question whether man, through the enjoyment of democracy, can control the wonderful energies he has discovered. The alternative nationally and internationally, for the cartels and their servants—the patronage politicians, the racial and religious bigots, the red-baiters and imperialists—to confuse, divide and finally destroy the forward march of freedom and plenty for all peoples.

David Lilienthal

As a relatively little noted, but important, by-product of the assault upon Lilienthal, was the 7-5 adverse vote by the Senate Public Works Committee on the appointment of Gordon R. Clapp as chairman of TVA. As in the case of Lilienthal himself, it is feared that Clapp would take his responsibility too seriously, refusing, like his predecessor, to set the public interest second to political patronage and utility monopoly pressure. One might think that this would qualify, rather than disqualify, him.

And now, for the sake of the record, the place of the Conference in the dispute.

1. Despite the fact that TVA has never offered equal employment rights to Negro citizens of the Tennessee Valley, the Conference has always supported it as a major step forward in Southern economic development.

2. David Lilienthal was a sponsor of the SCHW Convention in Chattanooga in 1940, along with AFL President William Green and a large number of men and women interested in the progressive economic development of the South.

3. During the present controversy Congressman Starnes, former Dies Committee vice-chairman, stated that the Committee never officially found the Conference to be a Communist front organization.

The Lilienthal fight has opened the eyes of millions to the true monopolistic objective of those who use the red bogey to keep all power—steam, water, atomic, and whatever further forms are to be discovered—tightly geared to their huge machine of exploitation and impoverishment. The kind of power that worries them most is the political power of the people which can replace men like McKellar, O'Daniel and Overton with ones like Pepper, Arnall and Folsom.

It is this power the monopolies and cartels are determined to destroy. It is this power which the people must use to prevent their doing it.

The Southern Conference for Human Welfare Reports:

Big Mules Kick Back

Alabama is girding for an important session of the State Legislature in May.

A call for action on state and federal legislation was circulated widely by the SCHW Committee for Alabama during March. It called for support of Alabama measures providing for higher upper level income taxes, jury service for women and emergency aid to public schools. With respect to Congress, the Committee recommended action to win support for Lilienthal's confirmation as head of the Atomic Energy Commission and opposition to cutting OPA appropriations. The Committee, along with SCHW groups in a number of states, rallied opposition against the Wiley Bill in the Senate. This measure, while nominally dealing with the portal-to-portal issue, actually emasculates the Wages and Hours Law.

With regard to political relations in the State, the Committee's monthly digest of public affairs pointed out: "As Governor Folsom unfolds his program for state betterment the Big Mules are getting more and more scared. What last year they feared, this year they know. Big Jim intends to carry out his campaign pledges. He is dead serious about returning Alabama and its great natural resources to the people.

"Nothing scares a Big Mule more than increased taxes and progress. And Big Jim has promised the corporations plenty of both under his administration. As a result the Big Mules have declared war. In 1946 the people voted for the Folsom program of increased old-age pensions, minimum teacher salaries of $1,800 a year, poll tax abolition, fair labor legislation, and farmers' cooperatives to break up monopolies to which Alabama farmers have been paying high prices for machinery, fertilizer and other equipment.

"Today, in 1947, our Governor is working hard to get this program enacted into law. He deserves the unqualified support of all true democrats."

Help from the West Coast

An energetic California group is mobilizing moral and financial support for the Conference on the West Coast. In January Melvyn Douglas, a Conference Advisory Associate, held a reception in his scenic Hollywood Hills home, at which SCHW President Clark H. Foreman was the guest of honor. He explained the significance of Southern progress to the well-being of the country as a whole and urged liberal-minded Californians to help the Conference combat native fascism.

In February and March, letters soliciting support were sent to 2500 persons in the State and preparations were made for the establishment of a group to be known as Friends of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare.

Detailed plans have been made by Mrs. Robert Lord and a committee of prominent Southern Californians for the conducting of a number of educational and fund-raising events in April.

Washington Appointment

Dr. Joseph L. Johnson, Chairman of the SCHW Washington Committee, recently announced the appointment of Robert Ware Straus as Executive Secretary. Mr. Straus assumed his new duties in March. He served various government agencies for the past six years in the fields of information and public relations, his most recent duty having been Director of Information of the United States Maritime Commission.

In June, 1940, Mr. Straus left the presidency of the public relations firm of Benedict, Odquist and Straus in New York to join the staff of the newly-created National Defense Advisory Commission. As deputy director of the Office of Emergency Management, he organized the information activities of the Office of Production Management, War Production Board, War Labor Board, Office of War Information, Office of Price Administration and other agencies.

In 1943 Mr. Straus was commissioned a lieutenant in the Navy. After 18 months of duty he was detailed to the U. S. Maritime Commission and War Shipping Administration in 1944 as Assistant Director of Information. After his release from the Navy he served the agency in a civilian capacity.

Dr. Johnson also recently announced the appointment of Mrs. Florence Bakote Saunders to the staff of the Washington Committee. Mrs. Saunders was formerly with OPA and has participated prominently in the work of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History.

Recent activities of the Washington Committee: Joint sponsorship of the "Save Rent Control" Rally at the Department of Interior Auditorium addressed by Rep. John Blatnik, Minnesota Republican . . . presented testimony before the Senate Banking Subcommittee in behalf of rent control . . . cooperated with the Committee for Racial Democracy in the Nation's Capitol in picketing the National Theatre in protest against discriminatory policy . . . Health Committee, after a complete survey of Washington's health and hospital facilities, recommended abolition of segregation and acceptance of Negro physicians in all Capitol hospitals.

Here and There

On March 1st the newly elected Executive Board of the Committee for **Louisiana** met in Baton Rouge. Emphasis was placed upon widening registration in all parts of the State, broadening Conference membership in upstate parishes and giving detailed attention to the forthcoming revision of the State Constitution.

Plans for organizing The Committee for **Arkansas** are moving forward. On March 2 and 3 *Southern Patriot* Editor Frank C. Bancroft met in Little Rock with the organizing committee headed by Rev. Samuel Freeman, Pastor of the Pulaski Heights Christian Church, and also conferred with Conference members in Pine Bluff.

Margaret Halsey, author of *Color-Blind*, was guest-of-honor at a luncheon March 20th arranged by the **New York City** Committee of the Conference. Mrs. Paul Tishman was chairman of the arrangements committee. Sharing the speakers' platform with Miss Halsey were Bessie Beatty, radio station WOR commentator, and Dr. Frank Kingdon, educator, author and radio commentator.

At an Executive Committee meeting of the Committee for **Virginia** in Richmond March 15th, plans were made for printing 10,000 copies of the Committee's State Legislative Program.

Recent chapter activity has included: *Arlington*—rent control campaign, recommendations for democratic redistricting of the county, participation in the creation of a consumers' council. *Fairfax*—pressure for improvement of Negro schools, including advocacy of a referendum to procure needed funds. *Norfolk*—sponsored "The Cooperating Organizations for Registration and Poll Tax Payments."